



TASK FORCE LIBERTY ***Press Release***

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FORWARD OPERATING BASE LIBERTY, TIKRIT, Iraq. Just weeks following Iraq's first democratic election, Task Force Danger Soldiers completed their relief in place with Soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty. Task Force Liberty is comprised of Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve units from 29 states and American territories.

As the Soldiers and their Iraqi Security Force partners continued their aggressive efforts to neutralize insurgent activities, the transition between combat forces allowed thousands of incoming Soldiers to further the progress in Iraq.

Throughout North-Central Iraq, Iraqi civilian and military leaders came together to successfully hold elections. The distribution of ballots and elections material, the securing of over 1,100 polling sites and the enforcing of security plans made this election an historic event for the people of Iraq. This was an election for Iraqis, run by Iraqis and the contributions made by the Iraqi Police and armed forces simply can not be understated.

Soldiers throughout the Task Force Liberty area of operations today continue their efforts to sustain this milestone by conducting a full spectrum of operations – Task Force Liberty continues combat operations to neutralize the insurgency and at the same time provide stability and support operations that help build a better Iraq. The goal of Task Force Liberty is to give the people of Iraq an alternative to the insurgency and improve their quality of life.

This bi-weekly press release is intended to inform and garner support for the Soldiers of Task Force Liberty and the families of the 42nd Infantry Division.



Breaking the Cycle of Violence

In the last two weeks, operations in the Task Force Liberty area have resulted in an estimated 251 anti-Iraqi forces detained, five killed and an additional nine wounded. Significant ammunition seized includes 3,780 rocket, mortar, and artillery rounds, 52 tank rounds, 20 explosive charges and 16 mortar rounds. Major equipment found included two sniper rifles, two mines, 170 small arms, 22 rocket propelled grenade launchers and 139 rounds. In addition, Task Force Liberty seized some \$450,000 Iraqi Dinar from anti-Iraqi forces.

Within the Division's area of responsibility, 27 improvised explosive devices were discovered prior to detonation, sparing Task Force Liberty Soldiers, Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi populace from injuries at the hands of anti-Iraqi forces.

Elections held in North Central Iraq on January 30 and their road ahead

It has been more than 50 years since Iraq has held a multi-party national election. On January 30, across the four provinces in the Task Force Liberty area of operations, over 1,600,000 voters, despite violent reprisal from insurgents, participated in the first of three democratic elections this year. Voter turn out was much higher than anyone around the world had anticipated. The world witnessed not only the bravery of the Iraqi Security Forces, but also the bravery of the Iraqi people who demonstrated an unshakeable will and a commitment to a democratic Iraq when they came out in resounding numbers to express their voice in choosing the parties that will make up the 275 member Transitional National Assembly.

This Assembly will be mainly responsible for writing a constitution that will be put to a national referendum by October 15, 2005. The constitution will provide the framework for the permanent Iraqi government that will be elected on December 15, 2005.

ISF and Task Force Liberty Soldiers Partner to Capture Insurgents

Iraqi soldiers from the 206th Iraqi Army Battalion and U.S. Soldiers from Alpha Company, 1-278th Regimental Combat Team conducted joint patrols on February 7th in



the area of Balad Ruz, Iraq. In two separate incidents, the combined efforts of the Iraqi and Task Force Liberty Soldiers captured two Wahabi extremist insurgents.

Training New Iraqi Police Officers

With assistance from police advisors from the international community, Task Force Liberty began a new individual and team combat training class for the graduates of the Samarra police academy on February 3. The two-week class is designed to foster team building and enhance the survivability of the Samarra police department prior to the officers reporting to their police stations to begin work.

Task Force Liberty is training a permanent police force of 1,200 officers who are being prepared to take on the responsibility of providing their own security in Samarra to defeat all anti-Iraqi forces.

The new class is in its final phase of training and will graduate on February 17.

Task Force Liberty Continues Full Spectrum Operations.

Units across Task Force Liberty's Area of Operations include 28 Forward Operating Bases in the four provinces of North-Central Iraq (Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Diyala, and Salah Ad Din). The full spectrum operations include a range of missions from intelligence driven combat operations to kill or capture anti-Iraqi forces to building relationships with local civic, religious, and tribal leaders to rebuilding the nation's infrastructure and economy. Task Force Liberty Soldiers are working hard to change Iraqi attitudes and provide Iraqis alternatives to the insurgency. Every day, Soldiers of all ranks within Task Force Liberty are making invaluable and lasting contributions toward a free and representative Iraq.

1st Brigade Combat Team (Raiders). The Dagger Brigade Combat Team from Fort Stewart, Georgia continues to maintain security while helping the people of the Salah Ad Din province during their historic elections. There have been many success stories in the 1st BCT area of operations – many directly attributable to the outstanding partnerships between the brigade, Iraqi Security Forces, and local Iraqi governments.



Elements of the 201st Iraqi Army Battalion from Tikrit located a rocket launching position in Kadasia containing three S-5K 57mm Soviet rockets while conducting a combat patrol on January 11th. The rockets were loaded into a home made rocket launcher aimed at the city of Tikrit. When discovered, the 201st Iraqi Army Battalion called the Tikrit Joint Coordination Center (JCC) which coordinated the support to destroy the rockets in place. The tenacity and aggressive mindset displayed by the Iraqi Army in this discovery demonstrates the benefits of their intense training they receive and the irreversible momentum they are achieving.

Another effective Iraqi security force in the area is the Iraq Ministry of Interior (MOI) 2nd Commandos Battalion. This federal police unit continues to prove its effectiveness in offensive operations in Samarra, Iraq. On January 13th, they conducted a raid that resulted in the capture of one insurgent and a cache consisting of two AK-47s, a Berretta sub-machine gun, and five AK-47 magazines. The 2nd MOI commandos continue to kill or capture AIF and make Samarra a safe and secure city for its residents. The commandos have conducted 204 raids since October 5, 2004, a testimony to their intelligence gathering capabilities and ability to strike at the heart of the Anti-Iraqi Forces.

Task Force Liberty Soldiers also continued to improve the equipment readiness of their Iraqi Security Force partners. During Operation Attleboro, the brigade's Task Force 1-7 recently delivered a variety of much-needed supplies and equipment to the Iraqi Police of Ash Sharqat. This equipment included AK-47s, ammunition and body armor. The timing of the equipment issue helped Iraqi Police at the Sharqat Joint Coordination Center (JCC) stand up the final node in the province's network of command and control centers. These centers link the Iraqi Police, Iraqi Army and emergency services to respond to local needs of the Iraqi people.

Success in the emerging local governments of Iraq was found in Task Force 1-77's area of operations. Assisted by the battalion, the Yethrib City Council ratified and signed their city charter in mid-January. The day marked the culmination of nearly six months' work between the council and multinational forces. The charter was read to all in attendance before the signing took place. First, a dozen sheiks signed the document



representing their support on behalf the region's family tribes and then Mayor Shouket and the prominent Sheik Razzaq finalized the ceremony with their signatures. The charter is a major step forward for democracy in Yethrib and adds legitimacy to the government there. Although this event was considered another success in the multinational forces' mission, it is even more of a success for the people of Yethrib on their journey toward a fully functional local government.

3rd Brigade Combat Team (Duke). The 3rd Brigade Combat Team (BCT) from Fort Benning, Georgia, continues to be aggressive in all aspects of operations in Diyala Province. The 3rd BCT has been very proactive the last two weeks conducting operations jointly with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police to kill or capture insurgents.

Over the past two weeks, these joint operations collected numerous types of mortars, mortar systems, artillery rounds, Rocket-Propelled Grenades, AK-47's, sniper rifles, body armor, 7.62 rounds, 57mm rounds and more. The 3rd BCT is conducting these joint intelligence-driven operations with the Iraqi Security Forces to reduce the violence in Diyala Province after the elections. Iraqi Security Forces provide the valuable intelligence that has helped in capturing these insurgents and caches.

The Iraqi Security Forces continue to improve on a daily basis. They are focusing on the training and operations that make them a more effective and independent fighting force and less dependent on coalition forces.

In the last two weeks, the 204th Iraqi Army Battalion took the lead during an air assault operation with U.S. forces to capture an alleged insurgent. More recent operations have provided security to gas stations to enhance stability in the province and protect Iraqi infrastructure.

The 205th Iraqi Army Battalion conducted multiple independent operations based on their own intelligence collection. The battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Thear Ishmael Abid, is extremely aggressive and recently conducted a cordon and search resulting in the capture of numerous insurgents and weapons.

Overall, the Soldiers of the 3rd BCT remain dedicated to their Iraqi partners and their joint effort to make Diyala Province a safer and better place.



116th Brigade Combat Team (Warrior). The 116th Brigade Combat Team, from the Idaho Army National Guard continues to provide security training, project support, and assisting local government leaders in the Kirkuk and As Sulayminaya Provinces following the country's first free elections in more than 50 years.

The 116th BCT consists of the 2nd and 3rd Armor Battalions, the 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion, the 1-163rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion, the 145th Support Battalion, the 116th Engineer Battalion, and various intelligence, signal, and combat support and service support units.

In the past two weeks 116th BCT Soldiers communicated the success of the recent elections through use of regional Iraqi talk shows and Iraqi press conferences in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah provinces. Talk shows on the regional Iraqi Media Network have included discussions of Kirkuk Province projects, a "Meet the Press" for Kirkuk politicians, a post-election discussion with Iraqi Security Forces and 116th BCT leaders about the success of election security and more recently a live call-in show featuring Iraqi Security Force leaders and the 116th BCT Commander, Brig. Gen. Alan Gayhart.

The 116th BCT's 2nd and 3rd Armor Battalions, the 1-163rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion and the Soldiers of the 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion, provided superb security support on election day and has continued working with their Iraqi partners in killing or capturing insurgents over the past two weeks. Other operations conducted by these units with Iraqi forces included the activation of the Iraqi Army's 31st Brigade in Kirkuk, implementing the security plan of election day, investigating rocket attacks and diffusing or destroying Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). These units also provided humanitarian missions and projects, including the distribution of toys to underprivileged children in Kirkuk, opening new schools in the community of Bajiwan and providing medical training to Iraqi Army soldiers.

The 145th Support Battalion and 116th Engineer Battalion continue their support for the BCT's logistics needs and civic project requirements to the surrounding communities in the weeks following the elections.



278th Regimental Combat Team (The Volunteers). The 278th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) from the Tennessee Army National Guard continues to work with Iraqi Security Force partners to apprehend and detain Anti-Iraqi Forces that threaten the security and well-being of the Iraqi people in eastern Diyala Province.

On February 2, 2005, a joint operation Mandali, Iraq between the Iraqi Army and Company D, 1st Squadron, 278th RCT, detained a suspect in the murder of Maj. Amar, a former Iraqi Army Intelligence officer, and is suspected of being an Iranian Intelligence Agent. The detainee is suspected of weapons trafficking and transporting Iraqis across the border for training in Hezbollah terrorist camps. The success of this operation improves the safety of locals in the Balad Ruz District, demonstrates the effectiveness of local Iraqi Security Forces and deals a crippling blow to terrorist operations.

The 278th RCT also continues to work with and train the Iraqi Security Forces to improve their equipment and readiness status. On February 2, Team Brave, 1st Squadron, 278th RCT, issued 38 AK-47 Rifles, 100 Beretta, 9mm Pistols, 2 RPK Machine Guns, and several thousand rounds of ammunition to Col. Khaliel and the Diyala Province's Southern Region Department of Border Enforcement.

As of February 3, Operation Clean Sweep has seized 92 x 155mm rounds, 3 x 210mm rounds, 9 x 8" round, 74 x 121mm artillery rounds, 20 x 106mm rounds, 162 x 100mm rounds, 59 x 120mm mortar rounds, 435 x 82mm mortar rounds, 322 x 60 mm mortar rounds, 389 AT mines, 9 AP mines, 294 RPG propellants, 2 rifle grenades, and 10 RPG launchers, 2 mortar tubes, 23 grenades, 65 artillery fuses, 7 x 122mm rounds, 4 x 105mm rounds, 5 x 125mm rounds, 1 x 152mm round, and 1 RPG round. This joint operation between the Department of Border Enforcement and the 278th RCT has made a valuable impact in denying the AIF the weapons to wage attacks against the Iraqi people.

In addition to working with the Iraqi Army, Soldiers from the 278th RCT also work with the Iraqi Police. On February 7, Soldiers from L Troop, 3rd Squadron, 278th RCT and Soldiers from the Iraqi Army conducted training and an equipment inventory at the Sadiyah Iraqi Police headquarters. The training was set up to assure that more than 70 police officers participated.



The 278th RCT also supported community actions to benefit Iraqi children. On February 9, Soldiers of the 386th Engineer Battalion conducted unexploded bomb awareness classes for school children at the Al Shahbar school opening in Balad Ruz. The Soldiers taught and passed out leaflets to the students to try to keep this generation of schoolchildren safe.

4th Aviation Brigade (Eagle). We have the controls! With that statement, effective Wednesday, February 2, the Aviation Brigade from the 42nd Infantry Division officially took over the aviation mission from the 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. This ceremony, held at Forward Operating Base Speicher, marked a landmark in the history of Army Aviation and the 42nd Division as an active duty aviation brigade turned over authority to a National Guard aviation brigade. Col. William Golden passed the colors to Lt. Col. Mark Burke. During the Iraqi elections, the Aviation Brigade, the division's 4th Brigade, flew over 2,450 hours in two weeks, marking the busiest flying period these two units have ever experienced as they helped to ensure the success of the Iraqi elections.

With all of the activity surrounding the Iraqi elections, flying continued as the Big Red One and elements of the Rainbow Division initiated their relief in place. Over the past two weeks, the 8th Battalion, 229th Attack Helicopter Regiment, in conjunction with 1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, flew more than 1,050 hours and conducted several VIP escort missions, including a visit by Ambassador Negroponte, the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq. Both units continue to provide security in support of combat operations in Samarra and Mosul, reconnaissance along the oil pipelines, convoy escort for the consolidation of election ballots, and route reconnaissance and security for units moving in and out of the area of operations.

The lift assets have not been quiet either, with 1st Battalion, 150th and the 1st Battalion, 140th General Support Aviation Battalions, in conjunction with 2nd Battalion 1st Aviation Regiment, flying more than 900 hours during the same period. All three lift units represent a tremendous asset for the division commander's use on the battlefield.

Without the maintenance support of the 642nd Division Aviation Support Battalion (DASB), in conjunction with the 601st Aviation Support Battalion (ASB), these aircraft



wouldn't be going very far. Both units continued to provide support to the Aviation Brigade by providing critical repair parts and maintenance to keep vehicles on the road and aircraft in the air. The 642nd DASB and 601st ASB's efforts allowed the 42nd Aviation Brigade and the 4th Aviation Brigade to fly the more than 2,450 hours during the past two weeks.

Division Artillery (Drumfire). Soldiers of "Drumfire", the 1st Infantry Division Artillery, are currently conducting a myriad of missions throughout the Task Force Danger area of operations. Over 60 percent of Task Force Danger equipment has been processed for redeployment by Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, DIVARTY, as part of Task Force Breakout, located at Camp Victory, Kuwait. Over 4,500 pieces of equipment returning to Germany and the United States have already been processed. Currently, TF Breakout is processing equipment from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, the 4th Aviation Brigade, and the 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. The DIVARTY's overall 48% radar acquisition rate (detection of enemy rocket and mortar fire) is the highest in Multi National Corps-Iraq. The radar sections across TF Danger achieved a rate of 55 percent in the last 30 days. These radars are essential in allowing commanders at all levels to properly acquire enemy artillery and mortar fire. The Golden Lions of the 1st Battalion, 33rd Field Artillery continue the critical mission of protecting Forward Operating Bases Summerall and Brassfield-Mora.

Division Engineers (Detonator). The Division Engineers began their mission here in Iraq with an important Infrastructure Security Conference held on February 9th. The meeting brought together representatives from security contractors, the Iraqi Army, and the 42nd Infantry Division. As representatives of the Iraqi ministries of oil, interior and defense gathered, they worked to develop a joint effort to protect Iraq's natural resources and infrastructure. The conference addressed topics such as employment of security forces, securing infrastructure repair teams, and current security challenges and solutions. The conference establishes the vision for future progress for infrastructure security in the Division's area of operations.



Division Support Command (Muleskinner). In April 2004, Soldiers of the 42nd DISCOM were told that they would soon deploy to Iraq for a year in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After months of training and preparation at Fort Dix and the addition of new Soldiers from various states, the unit departed for Iraq.

After the long months of preparation and training, the 42nd DISCOM has taken over the support role from the 1st Infantry Division Support Command. On February 5, there Col. Wentz transferred the support command mission to Col. Rochelle.

The 42nd DISCOM is responsible for providing Task Force Liberty Soldiers with food, water, fuel, ammunition, vehicle parts, medical services and transportation to accomplish their mission.

Conclusion

As the Soldiers of Task Force Danger and the 1st Infantry Division now prepare for their redeployment to their families and home communities, they can be proud of their contributions to make Iraq a free and democratic society.

Task Force Liberty, in partnership with its Iraqi partners, is ready to advance the momentum of the historic elections on January 30th.

The successful conduct of elections was the single most important step the country could make to defeat the insurgency. It was the first of many steps forward for the people of Iraq. We will continue to work diligently to defeat the insurgency. We will train, coach and mentor the Iraqi Security Forces; and improve the quality of life for all Iraqis. Our commitment to the future of Iraq is demonstrated in the seamless transition of the mission from the 1st Infantry Division and Task Force Danger to the 42nd Infantry Division – Task Force Liberty. We believe in the future of Iraq. To our families, friends, employers and the American people, Task Force Liberty thanks you for your steadfast support and encouragement. ***Never Forget!***

For more information on the 42nd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty:

www.42id.army.mil
